

CLAIMS

1. A vial supply apparatus comprising:

5 a vial supply part having a plurality of storage portions which store
vials having different heights according to size, each storage portion
comprising a partition wall, a rotatable endless member disposed at a
predetermined interval from the partition wall, partitioning members
disposed at predetermined intervals on the endless member, endless
member driving means for driving the endless member to rotate, and a
10 supply port for dispensing a vial stored between adjacent partitioning
members;

a chute portion for dropping the vial dispensed from the supply port
such that an opening of the vial faces upward;

15 a robot arm for holding the vial supplied from the chute portion; and
an adjustment table disposed below the robot arm, for adjusting an
opening height of the vial supplied from the chute portion in accordance
with the height of the vial.

2. The vial supply apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the
20 adjustment table receives the vial from the chute portion after moving to a
substantially upper end position.

3. The vial supply apparatus according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein, upon reception of the vial from the chute, the adjustment table is lowered such that the opening heights of the vials having different heights match, whereupon the vial is held by the robot arm.

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4. The vial supply apparatus according to any one of claims 1 through 3, wherein vial detection means for detecting the vial is disposed in a standby position in front of the supply port of the storage portion,

the vial is detected by the vial detection means after the endless member is operated, and
when no vial is detected in the standby position, the endless member driving means is operated by one more pitch.

5. The vial supply apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising shortage determination means for determining a shortage of vials when no vial is detected in the standby position by the vial detection means a predetermined consecutive number of times.